

REPORT

OF A

COMMITTEE

OF THE

STATE TEMPERANCE ALLIANCE,

ON

DR. BOWDITCH'S "ANALYSIS."



The liquor dealers of Massachusetts are largely quoting and circulating the opinions of Dr. Bowditch in favor of the use of beer and wine. This, together with the reputation of Dr. Bowditch, as a man, and as a physician, as well as his official position, as Chairman of the State Board of Health, entitle his letter on "intoxicating drinks" to the most careful examination. Two hundred and thirty-two letters were received by the Board, of which one hundred and sixty-four were from Massachusetts physicians in answer to an inquiry as to the effect of liquors upon life and health. Of these answers the Chairman makes this summary:

Very destructive to life and health.....	48
Injurious in a greater or less degree.....	48
Public health not affected in their towns.....	16
The people of their towns very temperate.....	27
Intoxicating drinks not used in their towns...	5
Bad on foreigners, but not on natives.....	4
Useful in the decline of life.....	1
Use promotes longevity.....	1
Indefinite replies.....	13

The remaining sixty-six letters, are chiefly from U. S. Ministers and Consuls abroad, and others whom they consulted. One is from Dr. Day, on inebriates; one from Larz Anderson, on wines in Ohio; and one from James Morrison, on wines in California. Dr. Bowditch calls his letter

to the Board, an "Analysis of Correspondence." The "Analysis," (except in a foot note) contains no reference to the medical replies from physicians in Massachusetts.

If we would rightly weigh the "Analysis," we must first look and see what it is that is analyzed. If we do this, we shall find so much space and weight given to the opinion of its author, and to the views of other authors, as to make the name ("Analysis of Correspondence") inappropriate and deceptive.

In the publication of the correspondence of the Board, there is a singular omission. Among its correspondents were the U. S. Consuls at Manchester and Liverpool. Each sent with his letter, (p. 292, 298 Report of 1871,) a copy of the testimony collected by the Convocation of Canterbury. It was part of the correspondence. It was direct to the point—based on personal knowledge,—largely from experts,—given by great numbers of English clergymen, governors of prisons and work houses, superintendents of asylums, judges, recorders, chiefs and superintendents of police, and was, moreover, specially applicable to our race and condition in Massachusetts.

Many hundreds of these witnesses testify that the beer houses cause the intemperance of England. The first legislative remedy they propose is "*The total suppression of Beer Houses throughout the country.*"

The length of this document would, perhaps, forbid its publication in full, but a summary could have been given in a single page. Yet this testimony is not even named! A document that ignores so important a portion of the evidence is not an "Analysis of Correspondence."

ANALYSIS.

1. CHARACTER OF THE CORRESPONDENCE.

Our ministers and consuls abroad can hardly escape the social and convivial habits of the society into which they are thrown. They do not come in contact with admitted intemperance, and where there are no statistics, they can testify only to what they see. Their answers, however, could not show a better spirit, or be more free from any appearance of intentional error. "*No statistics,*" is their almost universal answer. We have little confidence in individual opinions, without the data on which they are based, and shall, with few exceptions, waste no time on them. We make brief reference to revenue returns, that show the consumption of liquors, and to the few other statistical items.

2. CRIME.

(P. 279, report of 1871.) The letter of Mr. Russell gives the highest judicial testimony to the fact that crime in Ireland comes almost wholly from drink.

(P. 228.) The letter from the Consul at Manchester, England, says:—

"All the law, judicial, police and other authorities in this country concur that a very large proportion of the crime, poverty, sickness and premature death is caused by the drinking habits of the people."

(P. 275.) The Correctional Institutions of the Rhenish provinces at Herfordt, Hamm and Cologne, report in substance that about three-fourths of the crime comes from drink.

(P. 262.) The letter from Berne, Switzerland, says, that:—

Of 53 suicides in 1868 eleven were intoxicated when they committed the act, or were notorious drunkards."

(P. 340.) In the Netherlands it is said to be shown by statistics, that

fifteen-sixteenths of the crime committed resulted from the use of gin."

(P. 271.) "In Denmark, according to the inquest of the coroners, 26.5 per cent. of those who commit suicide are declared drunkards."

3. CLIMATE.

From equatorial countries there are no statistics, but the just inference from the opinions of correspondents is, that intemperance is less in amount, and milder in character, in warm, than in cold countries. *This, however, applies only to the native race.* Northern races, in warm countries, retain their drinking habits for generations, if not for centuries, as in Ceylon, Australia, and the Southern States.

4. HEALTH.

The correspondence teaches us very little of the effect of drink on health. (P. 308, Report of 1871.) In parts of the Austrian empire, where intemperance is especially prevalent, 55.9 per ct. of the men are unfitted for military duty from underfize, or physical infirmity, while in the whole empire, 33.5 per cent. are rejected. (P. 272.) Out of 507 cases of insanity, in the lunatic asylum at Copenhagen, in Denmark, 60 are attributed to intoxication. The "*opinions*" of the effect of drink on health are too variable for any general inference.

5. CONSUMPTION OF LIQUORS.

The statistics given by the correspondence are almost exclusively from revenue returns, and show approximately the consumption of liquors. Professor Levi's tables for 1866, as given by the United States Consul at Manchester, give the consumption in England, Ireland and Scotland, as follows:—(p. 298.)

Proof Spirits used Per head.	England, Imp. Gall.	Scotland, Imp. Gall.	Ireland, Imp. Gall.
In Gin and Whiskey,	0.535	1.659	0.800
In Brandy, Rum, &c.,	0.328	0.188	0.057
In Beer and Ale,	3.393	1.050	0.710
In Wine,	0.159	0.087	0.064
In Cider and Perry,	0.021	-	-
	4.437	2.984	1.631

The gallons beer are, in }
England, 896,000,000, } or 37 11* 8
In Ireland, 46,000,000, }

*Estimated.

(P. 270.) Denmark consumes 6,760,000 gallons spirits, or 4 1-4 gallons per head, besides beer, estimated at 20 gallons per head.

(P. 305, 306.) The consumption in the Austrian Empire is 31,800,000 galls. Brandy; 232,500,000 galls. Wine; 170,000,000 galls. Beer; or about one gall. Brandy, 6 2-3 galls. Wine, and 5 galls. Beer per head.

(P. 340.) The Netherlands consume 267,924 Hectolitres, or 7,100,005 galls. Gin, or a little over 2 galls. per head.

6. COST.

An official estimate from the Internal Revenue Department of the United States in 1868, sets the amount paid by consumers of liquors at from \$500,000,000 to \$700,000,000. Average \$600,000,000. Being \$15 per head, or \$75 per family.

England expended for liquors, in 1866, (estimate of Professor Levi,) 89,000,000 pounds sterling, or \$445,000,000. Being \$15 per head, or \$75 per family.

In Denmark the quantity (in alcohol) is greater than in England.

In Austria about one-fourth less than in England.

In the Netherlands (gin only given) about half that of England.

Prussia and other German States are not given, but a fair inference would be that their consumption per head was about equal to that of Austria.

With no pretension to accuracy, we estimate the cost per head in all these countries at less than half that of England,—say \$6.20—or \$37 per family, annually.

7. DR. BOWDITCH'S CONCLUSIONS.

The only important practical conclusions of the "Analysis" drawn not only from the correspondence, but largely from outside sources, are embodied in these two extracts:—

1. (p. 108.) The proposition of total abstinence from stimulants because intoxication prevails widely in the community, seems to me as preposterous as it would be to advise universal celibacy because of the existence of gross evils in connection with those instincts that lead to the divine institution of marriage."

2. (p. 111) "The example set by California and Ohio should be followed by the whole country, where the vine can be grown. As a temperance measure it behooves every good citizen to promote that most desirable object. We should also allow the light imported wines of Europe to be introduced free of duty instead of the large one now imposed. Instead of repressing the German lager beer we should seek to have it introduced into the present grog shops, and thus substitute a comparatively innoxious article for those potent liquors which now bring disaster and death into so many families."

OUR ANSWER.

THE CASE STATED.

The case is this. Dr. Bowditch and we are prescribing for the same patient. We prescribe water. He prescribes beer or wine. The question is, which prescription is best?

As it is the purpose of the "Analysis" to sustain, so it is the purpose of this report to question these two conclusions. Our limits do not enable us to do justice to the correspondence or to the "Analysis," nor will it permit us to give additional testimony. But for this we propose a remedy. The Board of Health can have no object but truth, and will doubtless publish in their next annual report any additional evidence and summary of proper limits and character, that may be furnished by this Alliance. Every impartial enquirer will choose to see the evidence and analysis for and against the above conclusions, side by side. We therefore recommend that the Alliance seek this method of providing for the deficiencies of our report.

DR. BOWDITCH'S FIRST CONCLUSION.

1. The "Analysis" gives the following "Cosmic laws" as its first argument:—

(P. 74.) That "the appetite for stimulants is one of the strongest of human instincts."

(P. 75, and other pages.) That this instinct varies under different influences, climate, race, fashion, etc."

(P. 75, 76, and Map.) That it is strongest north and south of certain isothermal lines.

(P. 79.) That "the climate of America is peculiarly stimulating."

(P. 79, 80.) That the influence of race is peculiarly strong with the English and Celtic races.

(P. 83.) That American drinking fashions are exceptionally bad.

Answer. Granting the laws as stated by Dr. Bowditch, do they prove his case? He thinks they do; we think they do not. He thinks they prove the *folly* of prohibition. We think they prove its *necessity*. If the predisposition of race is strong; if the influence of American climate is strong; if the isothermal influence is strong; if the influence of our drinking fashions is strong, it can hardly be "preposterous" to prohibit an enemy so strongly armed. The stronger these great "Cosmic laws" are, and the more fully they combine to increase the danger of the patient, the more strongly do they demand heroic treatment.

But the use made of the word "*instinct*" is wholly new.

Both children and adults, at first dislike ale, lager, tobacco, opium, spirits, and most other narcotics and stimulants. It is very loose and unusual to apply the term "*instinct*" to the *acquired* appetites for articles that disgust rather than attract the natural taste. It is *cultivation*, not *instinct*, that gives the *acquired* taste. Making new words, or new uses for old ones, ought to be confined to works of fancy. But call it "*instinct*" or call it what you will, its most striking peculiarities should have been stated. Other appetites when gratified, have a season of rest. *This* never. More requires more. The craving increases with time and indulgence. Reason may give warning, but appetite never. *Here*, just here is its power. Yet of this fact,—of this all pervading law,—of this peculiar characteristic in which the whole danger lies, the "Analysis" says nothing!

The argument from *instinct* pervades and dominates the whole "*Analysis*." The stress laid on it, and not its merit, warrants a few more words. In plain English, its real meaning is that in creating the *instinct* God gave His testimony in favor of feeding it. It means this or nothing. If so, His testimony is in favor of feeding it, as far as it really craves, and is just as applicable to tobacco, opium, and the fungus of Kamschatka as it is to alcohol. Is Dr. Bowditch ready thus to apply it. If not he rejects the key-stone of his argument.

2. ARGUMENT FROM OTHER STIMULANTS.

(P. 103, 104.) The "Analysis" holds up the danger from other stimulants as a reason for not prohibiting alcohol. There are tea sots, coffee sots, tobacco sots, opium sots, and so on through the list, and Dr. Bowditch is afraid to expel one stimulant, lest it should prompt us to use some other.

Ans. Both he and we would deem it good common sense to deal with the disease that was present and certain, even at some risk from other diseases that were distant and doubtful. It is true there is danger from other nerve stimulants, but it is not true that abstinence from one of them leads towards others. No such thing occurs until appetite reaches the point of disease. The reverse is true. That tobacco **increases** the alcoholic appetite is proverbial.

3. MEDICINE.

(P. 92.) We are told that alcohol is useful as a medicine.

Ans. With its proper use for that purpose we make no issue. That its prescription is too frequent, we greatly fear, but we do not see how the question of its use in sickness, affects an issue that relates only to its use in health.

4. INCONSISTENCY.

The "Analysis" charges the "devotees to abstinence" with inconsistency, as they only agree in opposing alcohol. On the use of other stimulants "they would split into innumerable fragments."

Ans. Admitting the premises, surely, if they all agree that one of these is more dangerous than any other, the inference strongly favors the policy on which *all* agree. If out of ten kinds of nerve stimulants they can agree to prohibit only one,—if they are ready to sacrifice theory rather than go beyond the necessities of the case, it is a proof of moderation.

5. POISON.

(P. 89, 94.) The "Analysis" denies that alcohol is "*always a poison*."

Ans. We wish the "analysis" and every body else to fix the "*poison*" question to suit themselves. Every one who wastes time on the question is equally absurd. Arsenic and prussic acid are not "*always poisons*." Infinitesimally diluted all poisons lose their right to the name. The point at which they ought to lose their name is "one of the things nobody can find out."

DR. DOWDITCH'S SECOND CONCLUSION.

The "Analysis" claims for its prescription of Wine and Beer, that it would bring two great benefits, viz :

1. "A vast wine trade," like that of France, Spain, Italy and Germany.
2. It would diminish intemperance.

OUR ANSWER.

1. The extent of the wine trade of the Austrian Empire is given in the correspondence.

As we cannot give the figures for all Germany, let us take as a sample the great Austrian Empire.

(P. 305. Report of 1871.) The wine exportation of Austria is stated as follows :

1864 (Eimers of about 12½ galls. each),	227,366
1865 " "	169,826
1866 " "	161,730
1867 " "	206,713
1868 " "	254,585

1020,220

Eimers or 204,044 Eimers per year. The government valuation, in other words the export valuation or wholesale price as we see (P. 307) is eight florins per Eimer, making a total value of 1,632,352 florins, or in round numbers \$800 000 a year!

This is a great representative wine country with thirty-five millions of people, and this is a sample of the "vast (wine) trade" held up for our admiration! If the nett profit of this vast trade were 20 per ct. it would amount to the vast sum of \$160,000 a year!! We can do better by making loco loco matches for the German market.

2. As a *money question only*, and supposing that as a drink it does neither harm nor good, wine should be made debtor to every dollar it loses, and creditor by every dollar it gains to the people. *It loses to the people of Austria every dollar which the time and labor spent in its cultivation and distribution is worth. It gains every dollar it brings in from abroad.* Now, let us ask, how much money is the time spent by the people of Austria in making and distributing (retailing) wine, worth? How much money would it bring, if devoted to some other production or manufacture? We attempt no answer. It is now worth just as many dollars as are paid for the wine by consumers, which at retail can hardly be less than three times the government wholesale prices. If labor would be worth the same on some other production, the account would stand thus:

WINE,—To the People of Austria, Dr.	
To labor and capital employed to produce and distribute, 18,-600,000 Eimers wine at 24 Florins per Eimer,	446,400,000 Florins.
	Cr.

By cash received for 204,044 Eimers exported, at 8 Florins,	1,632,352 Florins.
By balance charged to account of profit and loss,	444,767,648 Florins.

The people of Austria lose 446,400,000 Florins by the wine "industry" every year, and their only consolation is that they succeed in foisting a two hundred

and seventy-ninth part of the loss on the people of other countries.

A vast wine trade would probably do for us what it does for Austria.

THE AMERICAN WINE-LETTERS.

The Larz Anderson letter (p. 116, report of 1872) says:—

"I am well assured from my own observation that the introduction and general use of light wines have contributed to the lessening of intemperance in Ohio. On my return home I will endeavor to procure such statistics as may be obtained, if any exist, relative to arrests, etc."

3. Answer. The connection of the family of Larz Anderson, who is a son-in-law of the late Nicholas Longworth, with the wine and brandy business, weakens, if it does not sufficiently account for his *opinion*.

The letter of James Morrison (p. 116) says:—

"Before the introduction of native wines, drunkenness was very common in California. The native wines are now found in nearly every household; they have supplanted to a great extent the use of the stronger alcoholic stimulants. . . . I think the annual report of the Haik Away Association of San Francisco will furnish you the statistical information you desire."

4. Answer. The exceptional position of California, where but a few years ago the mass of the population was made up of unsettled adventurers, would be a sufficient answer. But aside from this, the letter bears internal evidence of the looseness and incompetency of the writer, and by no means accord with the facts. Yet upon the *opinions* of these two correspondents the "wine" prescription of the "Analysis" largely rests!

No feature of the "Analysis" is so curious as the elasticity of its faith. In England (P. 82) centuries of beer drinking are too little time for its prescription to work, while in Ohio, California and Frankfort twenty years or less is enough. From such extremes of faith and credulity the Board should have protected its report.

The Board, or its Chairman, will doubtless see fit to collect further evidence from Ohio and California for its next report. To this end the Alliance, if permitted, will give such aid as may be in its power.

5. WAGES.

We have already given an estimate of the cost of liquors per head and per family. But in order to see what share of wages is spent for liquors we must see what the wages are.

From "Reports from her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Agents," (Lon-

don, 1870,) we gather the following estimates of wages:—

England, average daily wages of adult males.....	\$1.01½
United States.....	1.58
Other countries named above, (accuracy not warranted) about.....	0.43

Prof. Levi estimates the working power of a family of five persons equal to that of two adult males. Taking that estimate, and 300 working days per year, an English family would earn \$609, and spend one-eighth for liquors; an American family would earn \$948, and spend less than one-twelfth for liquors; a German family would earn \$258, and spend about one-eighth for liquors.

That a tax on labor to the extent of one-eighth of its earnings must greatly affect food, clothing, &c., is evident, even if equally divided. But as some spend little, others a fourth, half, or the whole, a wide field of pauperism is certain.

BEER.

Several correspondents think a change from spirits to weaker drinks *would, if made*, be an improvement.

6. *Ans.* Nothing is more natural. Beer and wine are the alphabet,—the primary school, and far less drunkenness and violence is there seen. Casual observers always jump at the conclusion that “*if we could stop*” just before we get to the stronger drinks it would be an improvement. Further observation *always* dispels the illusion. The “*if*” is fatal, but with the *if*, or without the *if*, it is wholly a mistake. Barring the *if*, there would doubtless be less of drunken violence, but much more waste of time, and much more of bar room lounging and bar room education.

FRANKFORT.

1. The letter from the U. S. Vice Consul at Frankfort says: (p. 284. report of 1871.)

“Twenty years ago the city and country were full of dram shops, which owing to the improvement of the beer, and the introduction of coffee amongst the laboring class, have nearly entirely disappeared.”

7. Our answer is the letter of the U. S. Consul at Frankfort. He says:—

“From the small, compact, ill-ventilated villages * * every morning sally out the men and women, (and more women than men,) to labor in the adjoining fields, or to work in the near cities, spending the day upon a pittance of bread, and return at night into the village at dark to enjoy the only meal of the day, and to spend their evenings in smoking and drinking their beer in crowds or “*cliques*.”

If beer brings the laboring classes to this position, it is incredible that brandy 20 years ago did a more infernal work.

Beer is largely used by all the nations of northern Europe, but in no case does it weaken the brandy “instinct.” Russia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway in spite of great quantities of beer, fortify their food, and sometimes their *tea* with spirits. France takes the wine prescription in huge doses, and yet the “Analysis” seems to admit (p. 100) is going to the bad in spite of both medicine and “cosmic laws.” Eight gallons a head of the beer prescription does not cure Irishmen; eleven gallons do not cure Scotchmen; twenty gallons do not cure Danes, and thirty-seven gallons a head do not cure Englishmen. Yet in spite of this record the “Analysis” urges the wine and beer prescription with as much assurance as any vender of patent specifics. The annals of quackery are rich, but they have few cases more empirical.

Actual experiment, therefore, proves the failure of the beer and wine prescription. It has been tried in Germany, France, and Britain for centuries; it has been tried on the Scandinavian, Slavonic, German, Latin, Celtic, and Saxon races, and works so badly that the situation described by the U. S. Consul at Frankfort is quoted as among its successful results.

One conclusion of the Analysis, and one only is of present practical importance, viz: that the wine and beer business promotes temperance, and should be encouraged. We charge,

1. That on this point no direct question was asked, except, perhaps, of James Morrison, Larz Anderson and a German lager beer seller.

2. That the most important testimony on this point was suppressed.

3. That the analysis is unfair, and its conclusions unsupported by the published correspondence.

Every point of scientific enquiry, and every experience of other nations, has its value. We welcome every such contribution. But our first work is at home. Our first question is, “What is the effect of the wine and beer business on our own country and State? Why were not the keepers of prisons, correctional and reformatory institutions, prosecuting officers and judges of our criminal courts consulted? This has not been done.

We therefore make an earnest protest against the action of the Board of Health in giving circulation to a document that thus not only ignores the most important testimony from abroad, but neglects the more direct and conclusive Massachusetts testimony within its reach,—a document full of error that cannot fail to mislead the people, and perpetuate not only the evils resulting from fermented liquors, but also the evils that come from every other portion of the traffic.

We therefore recommend that the Alliance, through the State Board of Health or through the Legislature, seek to secure the publication in an appendix, or side by side with the Analysis, of a brief compend of the testimony collected by the Convocation of Canterbury, on the effect of the beer traffic in England, and such testimony, with a summary thereof, as may be collected in Massachusetts and other States.

Our report, long as it is, is only long enough to touch a few out of many points. No subject demands deeper or wider examination. The liquor traffic does more than any other agency to fix the moral and social position of the people. It does more than any other agency to fix the financial position both of individuals and States. More than any other, it affects the home comforts,—the food, fuel, clothing and habitations of labor. More than any other, it affects the political interests pertaining to the ordinary objects of government. The practical question of its treatment, *must be met*. It cannot be avoided. We stand but at its threshold. England is but beginning to move to its consideration. From France we are just hearing

the first notes of alarm.* The great German race cannot long continue to ignore it. Opposition and south side views can do but brief injury. They are but the transient eddies of a mighty current freighted with the destinies of the race. As in the past, so in the future, we shall have periodical wine and beer prescriptions and other empiricisms, but they will be overborne by the flood of facts, and by the rising intelligence of the age.

H. D. CUSHING,
W. M. THAYER,
G. S. HALL,
G. H. VIBBERT,
E. P. MARVIN.

*The National Assembly of France have constituted the physicians of that body a committee, to report on the increasing ravages of wine and liquor drinking in that country. *Le Constitutionnel*, one of the ablest French papers, says :—

In all directions its increase is remarked, and complaints are made of the disastrous effects which it produces on public health as well as on public morality. The *habitudes* of the taverns and the wine sellers lose all inclination for work, they desert the workshop during several days of the week, and the gains of the other days are entirely devoted to the indulgence of their passion for drink. Finally life is entirely neglected, all idea for saving is entirely abandoned.

* * * * *
The French race is deteriorating daily. * * * The drunkenness caused by wine is less dangerous. Unhappily the passage from one to the other is rapid. Men begin with wine, soon the pallate is palled and asks for strong excitement. Alcohol is taken. In 40 years the consumption of alcohol has tripled in France.

